DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 468 747 SP 041 093

AUTHOR	Hunt, James B.
TITLE	Service-Learning Delivers Real-World Accountability.
INSTITUTION	American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Washington, DC.
ISBN	ISBN-0-89333-192-9
PUB DATE	2002-02-25
NOTE	22p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (54th, New York, NY, February 23-26, 2002). Introduction by Charles Coble. Respondent was Arturo Pacheco.
AVAILABLE FROM	AACTE Publications, 1307 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005-4701. Tel: 202-293-2450; Fax: 202-457-8095; Web site: http://www.aacte.org.
PUB TYPE	Opinion Papers (120) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Accountability; *Citizenship Education; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Inservice Teacher Education; Preservice Teacher Education; School Community Relationship; *Service Learning; Student Participation; Student Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS	Student Engagement

ABSTRACT

This presentation by North Carolina Governor James B. Hunt discusses the need to get students engaged in their communities via service learning. Service learning reverses student disengagement by giving them responsibility for their own learning. This provides real-life contexts for learning, prepares students for citizenship through involvement in civic action, and contributes to personal and career development by reducing risk behaviors and increasing sense of responsibility and workplace skills. The governor suggests that to be fully integrated into K-12 schools, teachers and administrators must learn about service learning firsthand during preservice preparation. He recommends including service learning as a criterion for defining high quality teacher education programs. Research shows that students participating in high quality service learning demonstrate improved test scores, increased grade point averages, increased attendance, and reduced dropout rates. Such students feel more connected to their schools, exhibit fewer behavior problems, better understand community needs, and are more committed to service. Research also shows that service learning, when embraced by a critical mass of educators in a single school building, can impact the school as an organization or culture. A response by a University of Texas teacher educator reinforces the governor's words and stresses the importance of citizenship education. (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 468 747

James B. Hunt

SERVICE-LEARNING DELIVERS REAL-WORLD ACCOUNTABILITY

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. Imig

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

AACTE
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

AACTE 54th Annual Meeting ■ New York , NY ■ February 25, 2002

SP041043

2

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SERVICE-LEARNING DELIVERS REAL-WORLD ACCOUNTABILITY

by JAMES B. HUNT

presented at
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
54th Annual Meeting
February 25, 2002
New York, NY

Introduction: Charles Coble, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Speaker: James B. Hunt, former Governor, North Carolina

Respondent: Arturo Pacheco, University of Texas at El Paso

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education is a national, voluntary association of colleges and universities with undergraduate or graduate programs to prepare professional educators. The Association supports programs in data gathering, equity, leadership development, networking, policy analysis, professional issues, and scholarship.

The opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. AACTE does not endorse or warrant this information. AACTE is publishing this document to stimulate discussion, study, and experimentation among educators. The reader must evaluate this information in light of the unique circumstances of any particular situation and must determine independently the applicability of this information thereto.

Also available online at www.aacte.org

AACTE acknowledges the support of Leslie F. Hergert, Ed.D., Director, National Commission on Service-Learning, in arranging for this presentation.

Copyright © 2002 by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
All rights reserved
Printed in the United States of America
International Standard Book Number: 0-89333-192-9

Introduction of Governor James B. Hunt

CHARLES COBLE, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Governor James B. Hunt is the longest running governor in the history of North Carolina. During Governor Hunt's 16 years of service as governor, preceded by 4 years as lieutenant governor, he led North Carolina to an unprecedented level of growth of education and the economy as well. North Carolina has been blessed by some outstanding education governors, including Terry Sanford. But Governor Hunt has brought a new definition to the term *education governor,* so I will tell you briefly about some of the beliefs he has and some of his actions that I think have contributed to that comment.

First of all, he believes strongly in giving every child what he calls a *smart start*. He believes children's ability to succeed academically is largely determined by the care they receive even before they set foot in a public school. He launched a national award-winning "Smart Start Program" which is an innovation of public and private partnerships in North Carolina.

James Hunt and Arturo Pacheco listen to Charles Coble at the Hilton New York.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

He also believes in supporting family health and well-being because he believes that a child who is healthy and alert is more likely to succeed in school and in life. He has launched a program of immunization: Virtually 99.7% of all North Carolina children are immunized. The infant mortality rate in North Carolina is the lowest in history because of the actions this governor has taken.

He also believes in raising the performance in low-performing schools. He believes that to improve education there must be a consistent and rigorous means of assessing schools, teachers, students, and— by the way—teacher education programs, with rewards and sanctions and assistance to help them achieve higher standards. He has pushed for an accountability commission, which has increased the testing in our state by 35%. Our SAT scores have improved 40%, and North Carolina has achieved the highest NAEP scores of any state in the U.S.

He also believes in making schools safer, because he knows that schools must be safe havens for students and teachers. He created a Center for the Prevention of School Violence, which has placed school resource officers in every high school and in over 70% of the middle schools. He expanded alternative schooling for all children throughout our state.

He also believes in attracting and retaining the very best teachers. He believes that every child is entitled to a qualified, confident, and caring teacher every year, in every classroom. He led the passage of the 1997 Excellent Schools Act in our state, which raised standards for licensure renewal. This act provides benefits for high performance, such as a 10% increase for revised master's degree programs in public and private universities in our state and a 12% increase for National Board Certification. In 4 years, North Carolina has moved from 43rd in the nation in teacher pay to the national average.

Governor Hunt also believes in raising community support in schools—which relates to the purpose of us being here with you this evening—because he believes that schools and students cannot realize their full potential without the support of their parents and their communities. He created "Support Our Schools," an after-school program in every county of our state, and matched North Carolina Promise, with 40,000 volunteers, with other schools in our state.

Governor Hunt and his wife, Carolyn, personally tutored in the schools every week. Many occasions, we have been in the Governor's Mansion when he has said, "We must hurry along, because I need to go down to the school to tutor my child this week." That was a common occurrence, so we learned to be on time.

He also believes in improving higher education teacher preparation. He believes that a world-class system of higher education is one that is accessible, affordable, and essential for our economy and for progress in our public schools. He lobbied for a $3.1 billion higher education bond package, and it passed in all 100 counties in the state of North Carolina. It is the largest bond issue in the history of our nation for higher education. He advocated for—I know the deans will be jealous of this—a $1.8 million permanent allocation to support the development of partnerships for public schools for the 15 public institutions in the state of North Carolina.

In his last year as governor, he gave a remarkable State of the Union Address in the state of North Carolina—with the full assembly, the general assembly, and the citizens of our state in focus. North Carolina was the first in educational progress throughout the last decade of the 20th century. We aim to be first in American education by the end of the first decade of the 21st century—by the year 2010. So watch out!

Governor Hunt has become a national leader in education, because he believes that the nation's economy now depends less on the abundance of our natural resources and more on the quality of our public schools and our universities. As you know, he has led the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy. He served as founding chairman of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for 10 years. North Carolina has over 3,600 National Board Certified Teachers serving right now.

He serves as a founding chairman of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future that produced *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*. He chaired the National Goals Panel and served as chairman on the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education that produced *Measuring Up 2000*.

I want you to know that North Carolina and this nation are not through with Governor Hunt, and he is not through with us, because the University of North Carolina has recently established the James B. Hunt Jr. Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy. It's the first organization of its kind in the nation. The Hunt Institute will blend together new governors, top elected leaders, educators, administrators, and others to help them learn the best strategies for crafting education policy. This institute will help them become what they want to be—education governors.

Now, the Governor has received many national awards, but I think the one that is of particular interest to this group is in the year 2000, he was the recipient of the David G. Imig Award for Distinguished Achievement in Teacher Education. This evening, Governor Hunt addresses us as a member of the National Commission on Service-Learning, so, ladies and gentlemen, it is with great pleasure that I present to you Governor James B. Hunt.

Service-Learning Delivers Real-World Accountability

GOVERNOR JAMES B. HUNT

Thank you all very much. Charles, thank you very much for that too-generous introduction. I have a lot of friends in this room, and I thank you all for being here. I assure you that far-too-generous introduction will not go to my head. I have a spouse at home who takes care of that. On one occasion, we had gone to a big awards dinner and I had gotten the top award. Someone gave a speech like Charles did, and I got the award and we started home. The highway patrolman was driving us back to the Governor's Mansion, and my wife and I were sitting in the back seat of the car. It was dark and quiet and I was thinking about all of these nice things they said about me. I turned to my wife and said, "Sweetheart, you know something, there are few truly great men in this world." She thought about 2 seconds and said, "Yes, and there is one less than you think." I didn't know how to take that, but I still appreciated it.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

I especially appreciate it from a fellow who has had a marvelous lifetime of leadership as one of our nation's outstanding university leaders, and we aren't through with *him* yet. I am delighted to be with him and to be here with all of you right here in Manhattan. Mary Futrell is here. She was president of the NEA when we worked together, and now she is the dean at George Washington University. David Imig is here, my friend, whom I try to bring to North Carolina as much as I can. A lot of our friends from different parts of the country—I am pleased to be here with all of you.

Thank all of you and this impressive organization, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, for your service to America. You are looking at a man who has spent the last two decades chairing and serving on groups that focused on outstanding teaching—what it consists of, how you get it, how you keep it. One of the great things I had the opportunity to do, after Mary Futrell got me started, was to sit at the feet of great teachers and listen to them talk about their practice and talk about how complex the job is. I came to have a huge appreciation for teachers and some understanding of what is involved in it. If we just get some of our leaders to understand that, then I think they would support teachers and colleges of education the way they ought to. I am going to stay in that fight and we are going to make a lot of progress. I am determined to see us do a lot more in the years to come.

I speak with you this evening as a member of the National Commission on Service-Learning, chaired by one of America's true heroes, Senator John Glenn, and sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the John Glenn Institute on Public Service and Public Policy. Leslie Hergert is here from the Kellogg Foundation. One of my colleagues is Dean Arturo Pacheco. He and I served on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and I admire him greatly. I have been to his university and you will hear from him shortly.

These last several months have been one of the most difficult times in our nation's history. For some of you, this may be the first time that you have been here since September 11. I have been here many times since September 11. The fact is, we are here tonight less than 6 months after events that I think have really changed America. I hope these awful events have made us more committed to make our schools excellent. We all have worked hard to meet new challenges brought on by terrorism and the devastation and fear it has brought to our country.

September 11 was a horrible day. But just as those brave firefighters and policemen here in New York City showed what America is made of, so did another group of professionals on America's "front line": our teachers! They reassured, consoled, and comforted our children. They explained the unexplainable. I have wondered what it was like for first-year teachers, just into their first teaching job—not that it was any easier for veteran teachers. But since that day, our teachers have been asked to begin preparing students for a world that changed dramatically on September 11.

Teachers have worked hard with their students to turn their concern and energy into action that helped heal our communities. The result is that we now have a greater number of students who understand the meaning and value of what they learn in school as well as the meaning and value of community service and civic engagement. And teachers have seen that they are preparing students not just for making a living but also for making a life and contributing to the common life of their communities.

The other event that can and should change America is the passage in Congress, with strong bipartisan support, of the new education bill, which is much more than just ESEA reauthorization. The *Leave No Child Behind Act* is a whole new and powerful commitment of America to education. President Bush pushed it, Democrats and Republicans supported it. There was a huge, tremendous, powerful vote in favor of it. It represents a far more powerful commitment to change schools, improve teaching, and build America than ever before. It commits Americans to do several things of which this meeting should be aware.

Here's what I think is the essence: First, with a commitment from Congress, within 12 years, all students—including poor and minorities—must be meeting state standards and performing at grade level. All children in grades 3-8 will now be assessed in reading and math every year. All schools will be evaluated, and serious consequences will occur if "failing schools" do not change. In every state this is going to happen. By December 31, 2005, less than 4 years from now, all teachers in every school in America must be "highly qualified."

You know you are the inside group. Have you talked about it a lot with your faculty at your university? We probably should talk about it some more. But not just with them, with the leaders

in our states as well. With regard to this bill, there were a lot of people who said the federal government has no business in it. They don't want anything done for education. There are some people out there who say these goals are unrealistic. That's absurd.

Our job, of course, is to make this work for America. You talk about how you do it—there are a lot of things to talk about. Let's not talk about whether or not we should do this. Let's be committed to doing it! We may not be able to do it on quite the time table that they've laid out. This is a commitment to making America work. In 12 years, our kids will be learning more effectively. I am proud of it. I am excited about it. I am proud to see America try it. Let's find out how to do it!

I think this commitment to teachers, in particular, places a responsibility on the leaders of America way beyond anything that we have done before. It presents a particularly powerful opportunity and responsibility to colleges of teacher education. You have got to have partners, leadership, and resources to do your job much better.

Four years from now, when we look out there to see if all of our teachers are highly qualified, I believe they are going to be looking at you and talking to your institutions. I believe they are going to hold you a little bit accountable for it. In fact, they may hold you a whole lot accountable. Certainly, you need the leadership, the support, and the help to do your job. I am just telling you, 4 years from now, people are going to be asking: "Are they all qualified? If not, why not?" So let's do the best we can and do all of the work we can and get all of the help we can.

As you plan to gear up for greater effectiveness in preservice and inservice professional development, I urge you to embrace service-learning. It will help you and our schools meet the nation's new goals. Because I think it can do an enormous amount for how well our students are learning. The main focus in America is going to be how the students are doing; the teachers are a means towards that. I want to tell you that the people in Washington are serious about this. They are really going to measure. Do not think this is going to drop out, because it is not. The question is, how are we going to help our students do it? I believe in service-learning. The reason I went on this commission with John Glenn is because I believe it works. In the course of serving on this

commission, we have seen several exceptional examples that I am going to share with you in just a minute.

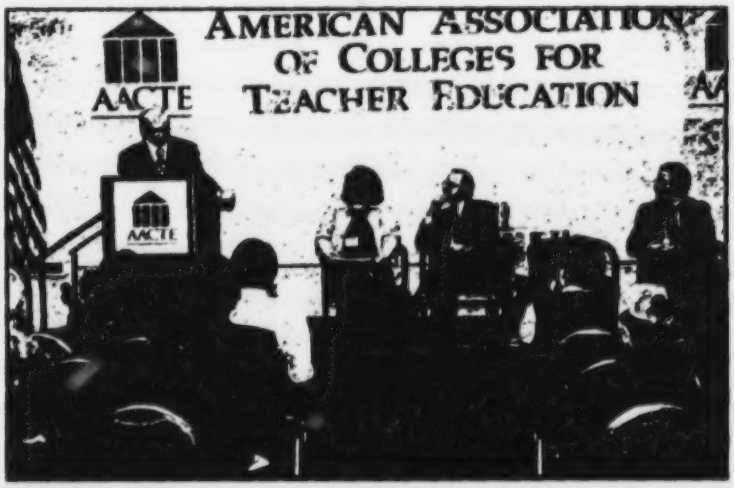
Getting students engaged in learning is not easy, and we have had only modest success. A decade ago, a major study led by Laurence Steinberg of 20,000 high school students in nine American communities found that half of them described their classes as "boring" and four out of five rejected the idea that it is important to get good grades in school. I don't know if you think that is fairly typical or not.

And yet, young people in America are volunteering and participating in community activities at unprecedented high volumes. A 1998 national survey by Peter Hart Research Associates found that nearly 70% of young Americans are involved in acts such as volunteering, belonging to an organization, or helping to solve a community problem. Hart concluded that young Americans are actively looking for new and distinctive ways of committing to the people and issues surrounding them. I think service-learning is a natural.

Service-learning stands at the intersetion of civic and academic engagement. It has attracted growing support over the last decade, not only as an end in itself, but also as a powerful vehicle for addressing some of the burning educational issues of the day. I will summarize a little of what we've learned about service-learning over the past year under John Glenn's leadership and with the support of Kellogg:

- It reverses student disengagement from schooling by giving students responsibility for their own learning and increasing their motivation to participate in school activities.
- It reinforces and extends the standards-based reform movement by providing a real-life context for learning and giving students a sense of the practical importance of what they are learning in school.
- It promotes the public purposes of education by preparing students for citizenship through involvement in civic action.
- It builds on the growing willingness of students to become involved in service to their communities while adding an academic component to such service.
- It contributes to young people's personal and career development by reducing violence and sexual activity and increasing their sense of responsibility and workplace skills.

13



James Hunt addresses educators as Carmen Coballes-Vega, Charles Coble, and Arturo Pacheco look on.

These things really happen through service-learning. They are possible. I will give you an example of the types of service-learning programs we found:

A few years ago at the Turner Middle School in Philadelphia, eighth-grade students participated in a year-long, problem-based, service-learning project called "Everybody Counts!" Through the project, students developed citizenship skills while improving community participation in the 2000 Census. Students learned about creating flyers, brochures, public service announcements, commercials, and much more. They really worked in the community to get people prepared for and to participate in the census. They learned quite a bit. The neighborhoods canvassed by Turner students had the highest return rate in the city of Philadelphia, which, by the way, means you get more money from the federal government.

Currently, Turner students and seventh graders from a nearby school, in a very different community, are coming together to learn about each other and their environment. Through joint visits to the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, students learn how earth science impacts the community by examining recycling, landfills, water and air quality, the effects of suburban sprawl, and fragmented environmental habitats. Students will document and report findings, build relationships with members of a different race, and reflect on the differences and similarities they encounter.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This is just one example of service-learning, and Arturo Pacheco can give you other examples that we have seen and done throughout this year. They are happening at every grade level, in all kinds of communities across the country. More importantly, they are making a difference in the lives of students, teachers, and their communities.

The impact on students is real. Research shows that students participating in high-quality service-learning demonstrate

- Improved scores on achievement tests
- Increased grade point average
- Increased attendance
- Reduced drop-out rates

Students feel more connected to their school and exhibit fewer behavior problems. Furthermore, students have a better understanding of their community needs and are more committed to service.

Research also shows that service-learning, when embraced by a critical mass of educators in a single school building, can have an impact on the school as an organization or culture. I just met with the Wallace Reader's Digest Fund before I came here this afternoon. We talked about the role of principals and how important they are in making schools a place where teachers can teach successfully. Service-learning is one of those things that makes that happen. Service-learning makes teachers more apt to stay and continue in this vital profession. Our goal is to ensure that every student in kindergarten through high school participates in quality service-learning experiences every year as an integral part of the American education experience.

If we are going to ask teachers to bring service-learning into their classrooms, we have to provide the support they need to be successful. As outlined in our report, to bring service-learning to more students, those responsible for educator professional development— including schools of education—all need to create a comprehensive and integrated system of ongoing professional development that helps teachers to forge stronger linkages between service-learning and curriculum knowledge.

15

The report also calls for the colleges and universities to make service-learning part of all preservice preparation and certification programs for teachers and administrators. To be fully integrated into our K- 12 schools, aspiring teachers and administrators must learn about service-learning as part of their preparation to assume these roles. Teachers have to learn this while they are in college.

I did practice teaching as part of my undergraduate education. My undergraduate degree is in agricultural education. I was a voc-ag teacher before I did a master's and went to law school. I did some service-learning projects in the community as a voc-ag teacher, and it worked—it turned the students on. That's why I believe in it so much.

To be fully integrated in our K-12 schools, our teachers and administrators must learn about service-learning firsthand as a part of their preparation. Every teacher being prepared ought to do a service-learning project in practice teaching and be measured by it. Many schools of education have already begun to teach their students about service-learning in separate courses and general methods courses as well as through internships, practicums, and student teaching. As faculty use service-learning in their classes, they become models of the practice for the next generation of teachers. Teachers-in-training often introduce service-learning to the younger students in the schools where they practice teach. NCATE and other specialized accreditation systems should create policy supports for teacher training institutions seeking to implement service-learning both as a higher education pedagogy and as an expected competency for future teachers. Service-learning should be included as a criterion for defining high-quality teacher education programs. State licensing boards, certification programs, and colleges and universities should include service-learning experiences among their completion criteria.

To help students and teachers do this, the commission recommends engaging new media vehicles including video, CD-ROM, and the Web. You know, when teachers are working in classrooms, they get so busy and there is so much pressure on them. Even if they have learned how to do it, if they've done it themselves, they still are going to need more help. We suggest curriculum resources, showing how service-learning is used to teach those subjects and linking service-learning to community. There are resources on promising practices and stories of how teachers and students solved common problems and initiated new projects. We suggest videos that

tell teachers how to plan and implement service-learning projects. We suggest creating chat rooms where teachers and students can seek advice, share successes, identify resources, and become a community of learners.

A comprehensive professional development system includes a variety of powerful learning models such as coaching, peer networking, study groups, and action research. Such a system should meet the needs of newcomers and veterans as well as teachers of every subject area and level of use. It should be research based, near at hand, and structured for continuous improvement. Teachers should be encouraged, trained, and supported to conduct research on their own practice as a professional development experience that provides rich learning based in their specific situation with their own students. Teachers should also develop their own leadership skills in order to support the development of local and peer-led professional learning communities.

Education associations and organizations should feature service-learning in publications and conferences, and in other ways encourage teachers to adopt it and to support those already using it. Youth and education organizations should find ways to support one another, learn from one another to expand the use of service-learning, and learn to support youth as decision makers and leaders.

Service-learning advocates should develop service-learning "teaching schools" where new practitioners can immerse themselves in high-quality practice and receive mentoring. The report of the national commission documents the extent to which academic and civic disengagement is a problem among American youth, and it shows how schools have effectively used the service-learning approach as a practical means of combating such disengagement. It lays out a plan whereby every U.S. student would have the opportunity to participate in this powerful learning tool.

Let me say to you finally that we are at a point where people really want to support these efforts to improve our schools. I am trusting that they'll do it and we need to push them to see that they do. We have really got to rack our brains to figure out how to do this well. We should have been doing it all along. Now we have organized for it and have officially committed to it.

I believe the time is now ripe for U.S. schools to embrace service-learning as a means of overcoming widespread academic and civic disengagement among American students and of raising a generation of American youth that are both world-class learners and world-class citizens. The time has come in America when we must dramatically improve the quality of teachers in our schools. The time has come when we need to have a breakthrough in getting students more engaged in and excited about their learning experiences.

I am absolutely convinced that well-planned service-learning, led by teachers prepared to do it well by their college of education, can help us meet these goals and build American schools to be the best in the world.

Thank you.

In response to Governor James B. Hunt

ARTURO PACHECO, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

Thank you, Governor Hunt, for those powerful, inspiring, and challenging comments. I have had the good fortune to work with Governor Hunt on a number of efforts, not just on this commission, but on a number of boards including the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. There is no elected official I admire more for his powerful and steady commitment to teachers and to working with teachers to improve their craft. Hence, I am tempted to say that the Governor is absolutely right, I agree with everything he says, and sit down. Let me only add some additional points from the perspective of a dean of education. I suspect that is why I have been asked to respond to Governor Hunt from this perspective.

Let me do so by asking a few questions, some of which may be on your minds already. What does service-learning mean to us, who work and worry every day about the preparation of new teachers or about the professional development of experienced teachers? Is service-learning just another add-on, a good idea, but one that will only stretch our very limited resources, both human and financial? Why is service-learning especially important in urban communities, like my own, communities that serve mostly poor and minority students? Let me now try and answer these questions very briefly.

The Governor has already made the point that service-learning stands at the intersection of civic and academic engagement. What does that mean? These are two absolutely critical elements for our work as teacher educators. Let me address each of them in turn. In a very important sense, academic engagement is really what all of the fuss is about with standards and accountability during the past decade. We want better learning for our students in schools. We have been working very hard to increase academic achievement for all youngsters in the schools through the introduction of standards for both content and performance. Yet even the best and most rigorous standards-based curriculum will fall flat unless teachers and students are engaged in and with it. Service-learning gives us a proven way of engaging young people in the curriculum. It is a powerful pedagogy, a way of thinking about teaching and learning that can be used with most any curriculum.

Good teachers have always known about service-learning. They have been using service-learning methods for a long time even though they may not have called it service-learning. Service-learning gives all teachers the chance to become good at creating powerful learning environments by a process that is more intentional than serendipitous. As such, teacher educators should jump at the chance to examine and experiment with service-learning. The primary concerns of new teachers, during the first years of teaching, are how to engage a classroom full of students.

The second priority, civic engagement, is also an important one. Over the past decade, there has been an increasing concern over the state of democracy, particularly the role that the schools have to play in the formation of citizens for a democracy. This has always been a concern in our history, from Thomas Jefferson to John Goodlad and his colleagues. This is the public purpose of schooling—the development of successive generations of young people into responsible citizens with a concern for the common good. Many of us have been worried about this very important agenda being lost in the fury over testing and accountability that has also marked this decade.

Yesterday I was walking in the Village with my daughter and we saw a quotation on a very large billboard on one of the NYU buildings, I think that it was a student activity center. On this billboard was a quotation from a contemporary political scientist, Robert Putnam, whom many of you know. This is a paraphrase of the quotation: "Through the tragic events of 9/11 the American public has an extraordinary opportunity to become once again engaged in its communities in serving the common good." The quote went on to imply that there was some doubt as to whether that would happen. I think in Putnam's case, it is both a hope and a challenge that it will happen. As you know, Robert Putnam, through his articles and books over the last decade, particularly books like *Bowling Alone,* has captured the imagination of lots of folks around the country in raising these important questions about civic engagement. Service-learning gives us the opportunity to address directly both of these critical priorities as teacher educators in learning and in the schools at once. It's a win-win situation.

Lastly, let me address why I think that service-learning in schools makes particularly good sense in urban communities like mine in El Paso. Eighty percent of the school children come from poor working-class families and are from so-called minority groups. I will give you two reasons that are very important to me.

First, service-learning provides community service opportunities for everyone. There has been a wonderful tradition of public or community service in this nation—one that we should all be very proud of. One of the problems, however, is that the opportunity for community service has not been equally available for all. Kids from poor families are often stuck with problems of day-to-day survival, and their circumstances often don't allow them to think about the possibility of community service. It's amazing that so many youngsters do it anyway. Most high school and college students have part-time and often full-time jobs while they go to school. Not having the opportunity for community service is a serious loss, both for the youngsters themselves and for the nation as a whole. Service-learning provides this important opportunity for all youngsters by connecting directly to the schools and the academic curriculum. It provides the opportunity for both increased academic achievement and increased learning about being a productive citizen in a democracy.

My second reason is that service-learning helps teachers understand the children and communities in which they serve. Not only students, but teachers as well, can benefit tremendously from the service-learning experience. We face an increasing number of new teachers who are going to teach in communities they don't understand very well. They are not from the community and they may come from a community that is quite different. We know that there is still a scarcity of teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds in the U.S., and the forecast does not look that good. The percentage of those teachers is not growing very rapidly. In fact, there is some data that suggests that it is getting smaller. Yet we also know that if teachers understand something about the background of their students, they are better teachers.

Service-learning provides the context—one that is safe, rewarding, and work-related—for new teachers to learn about the communities in which they teach. This has been the case in my own community, where a number of college faculty and teachers have been engaged with their students in service-learning projects. The lessons learned have been invaluable. Those college teachers, I suggest, are better teachers because of service-learning.

Let me conclude by saying that all of the above shows that I do, in fact, agree with Governor Hunt and his enthusiasm for service-learning. *Now I'll sit down*. Thank you.

AACTE

1307 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005-4701
Tel: 202-293-2450
Fax: 202-457-8095
www.aacte.org

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

[X] This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

[ ] This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").